

## **Flat Country Project Draft Record of Decision and Final Environmental Impact Statement Notice of Availability and Pre-Decisional Administrative Review (Objection)**

The Flat Country Project Draft Record of Decision (Draft ROD) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the McKenzie River Ranger District, Willamette National Forest has been completed. This is the Notice of Availability and Pre-Decisional Administrative Review (Objection) advertisement. The proposed decision is to select a modified Alternative 2. Alternative 2 will allow treatments on approximately 4,438 acres in the project area. Harvest treatments will include thinning, gap creation, dominant tree release, regeneration harvest, and skips. Harvest treatments will occur in stands ranging in age from approximately 27-180 years old and yield approximately 102 million board feet of timber. Post-harvest fuels treatments include pile and burn and post-harvest underburn. The project also includes 2,305 acres of roadside fuel treatments. This project includes restoration activities on 150 acres of meadow habitat. Approximately 15.5 miles of temporary road construction will occur and approximately 109 miles of existing road will be maintained.

The purpose of the Flat Country Project is to, (1) provide a sustainable supply of timber products, (2) actively manage stands to improve stand conditions in terms of density, diversity, and structure (3) increase vegetative habitat complexity and hardwood composition along streams, and (4) sustainably manage the network of roads in the project area. The Flat Country Project is located within the Boulder, Kink, White Branch, and Lost Creek subwatersheds (6th field) of the Upper McKenzie River watershed. The project area is bounded on the west by Highway 126, on the south by Highway 242, and on the east by the district boundary with the Mount Washington Wilderness. The legal description for proposed units in Lane County is: T.15S., R.6E., Sections 24, 25 & 36; T.15S., R.7E., Sections 19 through 22, 27 through 34; T.16S., R.6E., Sections 1, 11, 12, 13 & 14 T.16S., R.7E., Sections 1 through 11, 14 through 19; Willamette Meridian. The legal description for proposed units in Linn County is: T.14S., R.7E., Sections 33 & 34; T.15S., R.6E., Section 12 & 13; T.15S., R.7E., Sections 3 through 7, 15 through 18; Willamette Meridian.

The Flat Country project is subject to pre-decisional administrative review (objection) pursuant to 36 CFR 218. The 45-day objection period begins the day following publication of notice of availability and objection in the *Eugene Register Guard*, the newspaper of record for the Willamette National Forest. Only individuals or organizations that submitted specific written comments during any designated opportunity for public participation (scoping or public comment periods) may object (36 CFR 218.5). Objections must be filed with the reviewing officer in writing and all objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment. The burden is on the objector to demonstrate compliance with this requirement for objection issues (36 CFR 218.8(c)).

An objection must meet all of the requirements described in 36 CFR 218.8. At a minimum, an objection must include: objector's name and address; the name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name of the national forest and/or ranger district on which the proposed project will be implemented; a description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and a statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunities for comment.

Evidence of and responsibility for timely filing is described in 36 CFR 218.9. Objections must be postmarked or received by the Reviewing Officer, the Forest Supervisor, within 45 days from the date of publication of notice of availability and objection in the newspaper of record. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to file an objection should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Objections may be submitted in the following ways: (1) **Electronic Submission:** Electronic objections will be accepted through the Forest Service online comment system available at <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?project=53966>; (2) **Delivered to:** Springfield Interagency Office at 3106 Pierce Parkway, Suite D, Springfield, Oregon between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday except legal holidays; or (3) **Mailed to:** Dave Warnack, Forest Supervisor, Willamette National Forest, Attention: Objections, 3106 Pierce Parkway, Suite D, Springfield, Oregon 97477.

The Draft ROD and FEIS are available on the Forest Service Website at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53966>. A limited number of hard copies will be available upon request. For additional information regarding the Flat Country project or to request a copy of the Draft ROD and FEIS, contact Dean Schlichting at (541) 822-7214, [dean.schlichting@usda.gov](mailto:dean.schlichting@usda.gov), or at the McKenzie River Ranger District at 57600 McKenzie Highway, McKenzie Bridge, Oregon.

**Published in the *Eugene Register Guard* on Friday, June 26th, 2020.**